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BIZARRE ADVENTURES

STEPHEN KING'S THE LAWNMOWER MAN



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STAN LEE PRESENTS BIZARRE ADVENTURES

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HORROR

One trembles to think of that mysterious thing in the soul, which seems to acknowledge no human jurisdiction, but in spite of the individual's own innocent self, will still dream horrid dreams, and mutter unmentionable thoughts.

-Herman Melville

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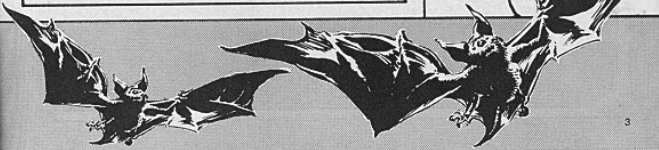
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Talk about horrible...





A FEW WORDS ABOUT THIS ISSUE:

We're proud of it.

the lawnmower man

IN PREVIOUS YEARS, HAROLD PARKETTE HAD ALWAYS TAKEN PRIDE IN HIS LAWN. HE PAID THE KID DOWN THE BLOCK FIVE BUCKS A WEEK TO CUT IT WITH A LAWNBOY ALMOST AS BIG AS A CABIN CRUISER. GREAT DAYS...



...THE RED SOX WERE AT THE TOP OF THEIR DIVISION, GOD WAS IN HIS HEAVEN, AND ALL WAS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD...



BOTTOM OF THE THIRD... RED SOX LEADING THE YANKEES BY A SCORE OF SIX TO NOTHING...

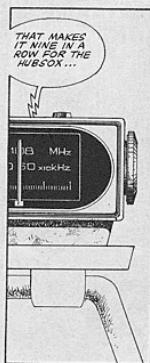
...AND THAT INCLUDED HAROLD'S LAWN. GREAT DAYS, ALL RIGHT...



TORREZ HAS STRUCK OUT REGGIE JACKSON ... JUST BLEW IT BY HIM ...



...AND LISTEN TO THAT CROWD!



THAT MAKES IT NINE IN A ROW FOR THE HUBSOX ...

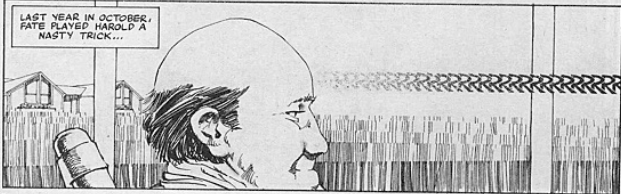


...AS THEY SWEEP THE YANKEES HERE IN YANKEE STADIUM.



THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH GREAT DAYS IS THAT THEY NEVER LAST...

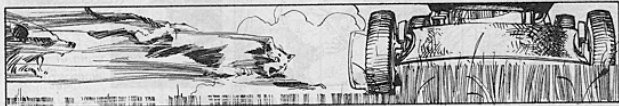
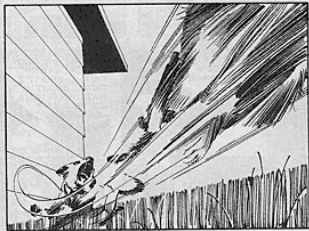
LAST YEAR IN OCTOBER, FATE PLAYED HAROLD A NASTY TRICK...



WHILE THE BOY WAS
MOWING THE GRASS...

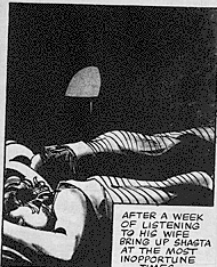
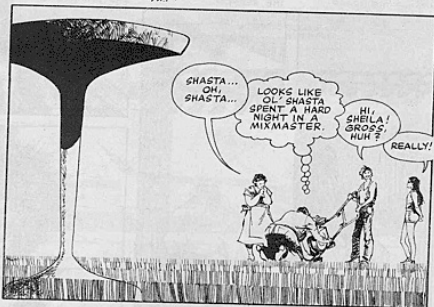
...FOR THE LAST TIME OF
THE SEASON...

THE
CASTONMEYER'S
DOG...

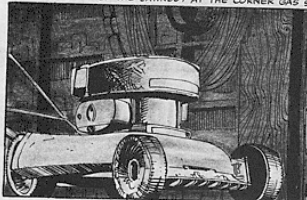


...UNDER THE MOWER.

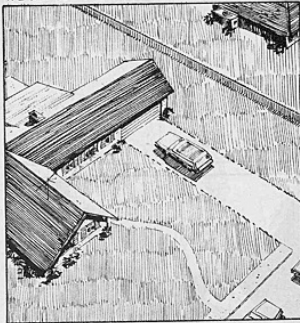
HAROLD'S WIFE RETURNED HOME FROM THE LOCAL SHOPPING MALL JUST IN TIME TO SEE HAROLD CLEANING THE CAT OFF THE BLADES...



...HAROLD SWAPPED THE LAWNBOY AT THE CORNER GAS STATION FOR A TANK OF HIGH-TEST AND A NEW RADIAL TIRE.



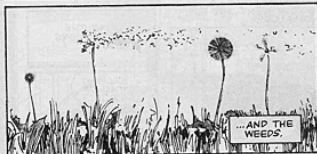
THE FOLLOWING SPRING, HAROLD KEPT PUTTING OFF THE NECESSARY HIRING. AS MAY BECAME JUNE AND THE RED SOX WALLOWED IN 4TH PLACE...



...THE GRASS THRIVED AND GREW.



SO DID THE DANDELIONS... THE CRABGRASS...



...AND THE WEEDS.

BY MID-JULY, JACK CASTONMEYER HAD BEGUN TO MAKE UNFUNNY JOKES ABOUT THE PRICE OF HAY AND ALFALFA.



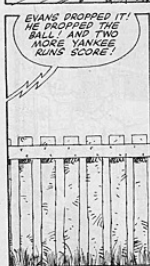
HE'S IN COLLEGE?

YOU'RE SURE?

YES, I KNOW YOU'RE HIS MOTHER, BUT... ALL RIGHT, MRS. STARK... GOOP BYE!



EVANS DROPPED IT! HE DROPPED THE BALL! AND TWO MORE YANKEE RUNS SCORE!



THE GREAT DAYS, LIKE THE LAWNBOY, WERE MOST DEFINITELY GONE...

DRUGS AND SEX AND ROCK AND ROLL! AND CLOTHES... AND DENTAL CAPS... SOFT CONTACTS... BLAH... BLAH... BLAH...



ANY NUMBER OF LOCAL BOYS BEGAN DRIVING HIS DAUGHTER OFF TO THE LOCAL PASSION-PIT ON FRIDAY NIGHTS...

YOU GONNA BALE IT OR RAKE IT, HAROLD?



...CASTONMEYER BECAME LESS AND LESS FUNNY...

...AND DON SMITH'S FOUR-YEAR-OLD STARTED HIDING IN HAROLD'S LAWN WHEN THERE WERE BRUSSELS SPROUTS FOR DINNER.



ONE DAY
IN LATE
JULY...



...AND THE RED
SOX BULLPEN WAS
UTTERLY COLLAPSED
HERE IN THE
SEVENTH...

HAROLD WENT OUT FOR
SOME AIR...



...ALLOWING
SEVEN EARNED
RUNS...

...DURING THE
SEVENTH INNING
STRETCH...

...WALKING
A TOTAL OF
FIVE...



...AND SAW A WOOD-
CHUCK SITTING PERKILY
ON THE BACK WALK.

FOR HAROLD THAT WAS IT. THE TIME HAD COME TO
TAKE ARMS AGAINST A SEA OF TROUBLES. AND IN THE
PAPER...

LAWNS MOWED,
REASONABLE,
776-2390.

ALL
RIGHT!



HE WAS ALONE FOR THE AFTERNOON.
HE THOUGHT HIS WIFE AND
DAUGHTER WOULD BE PLEASANTLY
SURPRISED TO COME BACK AND
FIND THE LAWN CUT.

...WE'LL
SEND A
MAN
RIGHT
OUT!

PAMMED
STRAIGHT!



WE'LL SEND
OUT KARRAS
... HE'S OUR
BEST MAN.

KARRAS?
WHAT
KIND OF
NAME IS
THAT?

KRAUT?
GREEK? WHO
CARES AS
LONG AS HE
CUTS THE DAMN
GRASS.

HAROLD WENT BACK
OUT ON THE PATIO...

...AND
DOZED
OFF.

ONCE AGAIN,
OUR FINAL
SCORE--
ORIOLES 14,
RED SOX 3.
THIS HAS
BEEN ...

HALF AN HOUR LATER,
JUST AS HAROLD WAS
SLIPPING INTO A
SWEET DREAM OF
THE GREAT DAYS...

JESUS!

SQUAWK!

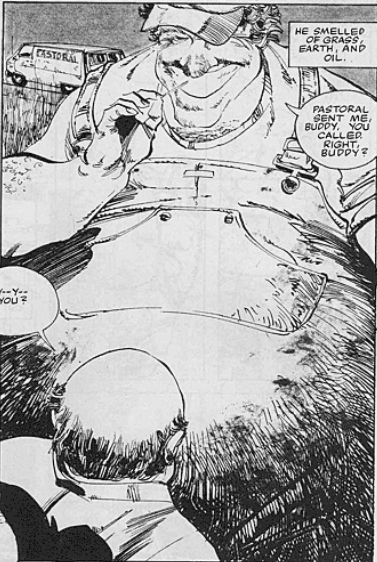
HAROLD WENT TO THE DOOR...



WHAT...
IN THE
NAME OF
GOD...



THE MAN FROM PASTORAL GREENERY WAS SO HUGE, HAROLD HALF-BELIEVED HE HAD SWALLOWED A BASKETBALL.



THE...
UH... BACK
LAWN'S
THE REAL
CHORE...



I'M AFRAID
I'VE SORT
OF... WELL...
LET IT GO...

NO PROBLEM,
BUDDY, NO
PROBLEM. GONNA
FIX YA RIGHT
UP BY
CIRCE!



NOW HAROLD HAD PLACED THE MAN
AND EVERYTHING WAS ALL RIGHT.
HE HAD SEEN THE TYPE BEFORE...



...ALWAYS LOOKING AT
YOU LIKE THEY WERE
THE SALT OF THE
EARTH...

...ABLE TO HIT YOU FOR FIVE
OR SLEEP WITH YOUR WIFE
ANYTIME THEY WANTED TO.



HAROLD SAT DOWN WITH
THE FINANCIAL SECTION
OF THE PAPER...



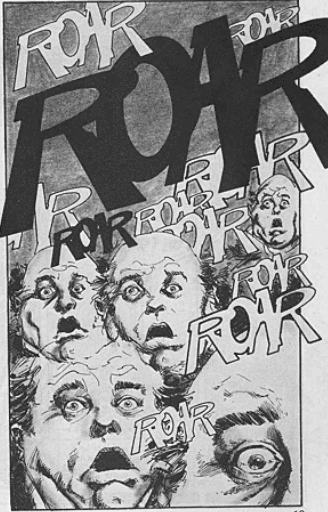
BY
CIRCE?

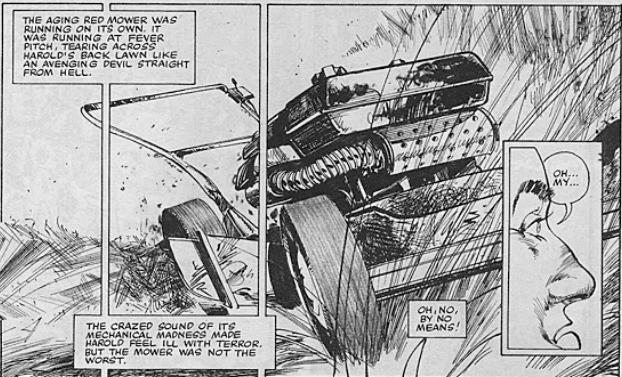
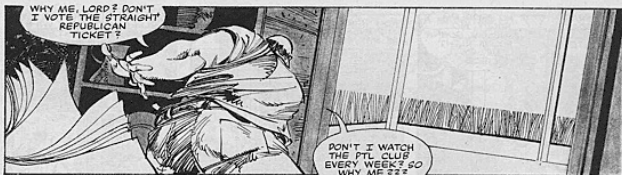
BY
CIRCE?
WHAT
KIND OF...
ZZZ...



...AND SOON DOZED OFF AGAIN.

THEN, FROM OUTSIDE... A SOUND MORE LIKE THE
FIRST LAP OF THE INDY 500 THAN A LAWNMOWER...





GOD!

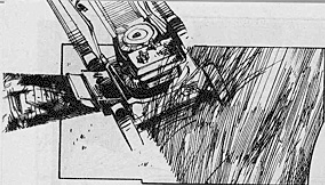
THE LAWNMOWER
MAN WAS THE TRUE
OBSCENITY...

**CHOMPI!
SLURPI!
MUNCH!
CRUNCH!
GULP!**

**SNORT!
FUTI!
GRUT!
GRUNT!
ULP!**

NAKED AND GRASS-STAINED, HE WAS CRAWLING ALONG ABOUT FIVE FEET BEHIND THE MOWER, *EATING* THE CUT GRASS. GREEN JUICE RAN DOWN HIS CHIN AND DRIPPED ON HIS HUGE BELLY. HAROLD FELT HIS GUTS' CHURN.

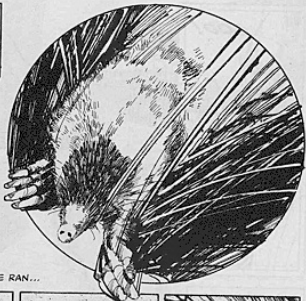
**STOP! STOP
THAT!!**



THEN HAROLD
SAW THE MOLE
THAT HAD BEEN
HIDING...



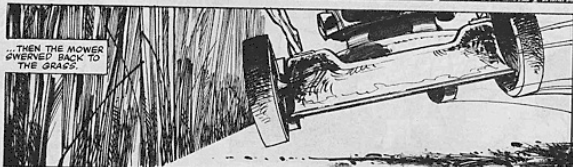
...IN STUNNED
TERROR JUST
AHEAD OF THE
MOWER. THE MOLE RAN...



...THE MOWER
SWERVED...
AND...



SCRUNCH



...THEN THE MOWER
SWERVED BACK TO
THE GRASS.

HAROLD WATCHED, STUNNED, REVOLTED, AS THE LAWNMOWER MAN ALSO SWERVED TOWARD THE MOLE'S MANGLED BODY AND...



MUNCH!
SMACK!
GULP!

AFTER VOMITING INTO
THE ZINNIAS BESIDE
THE BACK DOOR...

PLEASE NO...
PLEASE NO...
PLEASE...

HAROLD
PARKETTE...

...NO...

...FAINED.

SOMEONE WAS
SHAKING HIM--WHO?

HIS WIFE... OF COURSE IT WAS. THE REST HAD BEEN A HORRIBLE, GRISLY DREAM. HADN'T IT?

HADN'T IT?

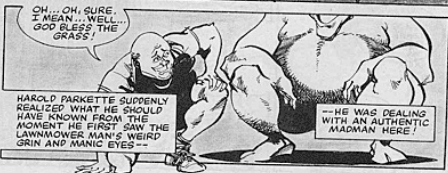
LOOKING UP AT THE LAWNMOWER MAN'S GREEN, HAIRY TEETH, HAROLD REALIZED THAT THIS WAS NO DREAM.



HAROLD SAW THERE WOULD BE NO NEED TO RAKE THIS JOB; THE LAWNMOWER MAN HAD EATEN EVERY CUT BLADE.



COURSE, EVERY NOW AND THEN, WE RUN INTO A CUSTOMER WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND--



GOD BLESS
THE GRASS!
THAT'S PRETTY
GOOD, OL'
BUDDY!

DAMNED GOOD! I CAN SEE
YOU GOT THE RIGHT SPLIT!
I'M GONNA WRITE THAT
SUCKER DOWN!

MEANTIME,
DUTY CALLS
--RIGHT?

HUH...OH...OH, SURE!
WHATEVER YOU SAY!
I... I THINK I'LL
FINISH MY NAP...

YOU GO
RIGHT AHEAD,
GOOD BUDDY.
THIS HITS EVERY-
BODY KINDA HARD
AT FIRST!

YOU'LL
GET USED
TO IT!

THE POLICE?
OR THE MENTAL
HOSPITAL?

RIGHT!

IN FACT, YOU MIGHT
EVEN WANT TO GIVE
IT A WHIRL YOUR-
SELF, GOOD
BUDDY!

THE BOSS
HAS ALWAYS
GOT AN EYE
OUT FOR NEW
TALENT!

THE POLICE.
911.

THE
BOSS?

WELL, SAY, BUDDY.
I FIGURED YOU MUST
HAVE GUESSED, GOD
BLESS THE GRASS
AND ALL.

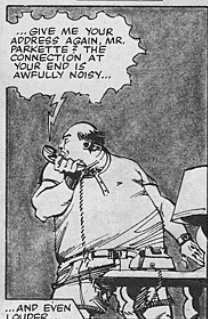
PAN'S
THE BOSS!

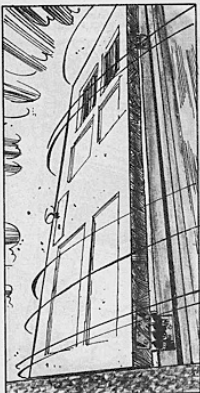
HAROLD WATCHED
NUMBLY AS THE LAWN-
MOWER MAN STARTED
AROUND FRONT...

THE NEIGH-
BORS!

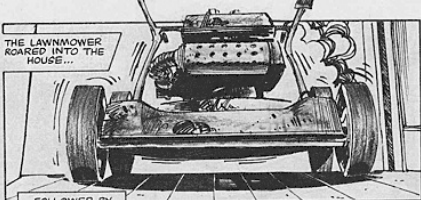
NO SWEAT,
BUDDY--
RIGHT,
RIGHT?

AS THE LAWNMOWER BEGAN TO SCREAM AGAIN, ONLY OUT FRONT AGAIN, HAROLD THOUGHT OF THE NEIGHBORS: DEMOCRATS... YANKEE FANS... COMMIESYMP PRO-ABORTION FAGGOT-LOVING CREEPS!

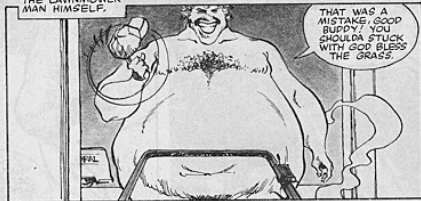




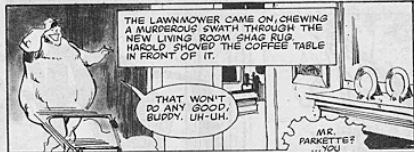
THE LAWNMOWER
ROARED INTO THE
HOUSE...



...FOLLOWED BY
THE LAWNMOWER
MAN HIMSELF.



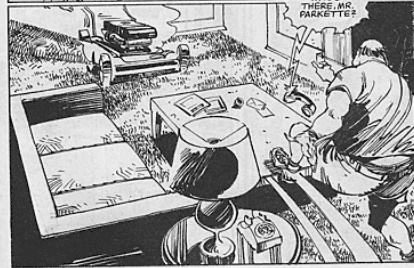
THAT WAS A
MISTAKE, GOOD
BUDDY. YOU
SHOULDA STUCK
WITH GOD BLESS
THE GRASS.



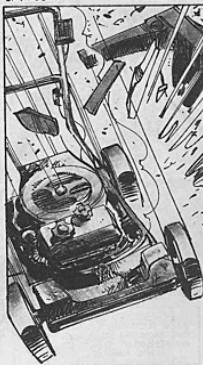
THE LAWNMOWER CAME ON, CHEWING
A MURDEROUS SWATH THROUGH THE
NEW LIVING ROOM SHAG RUG.
HAROLD SHOVED THE COFFEE TABLE
IN FRONT OF IT.

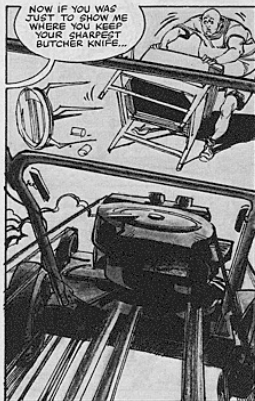
THAT WON'T
DO ANY GOOD,
BUDDY. UH-UH.

MR.
PARKETTE?
...YOU
THERE, MR.
PARKETTE?

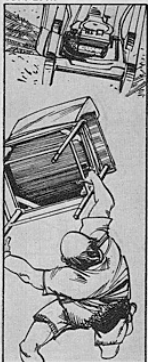


THE RAVING LAWNMOWER CHEWED
THROUGH THE COFFEE TABLE,
SPITTING OUT SPLINTERS AND
SAWDUST.

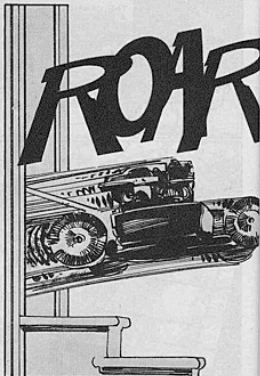




HAROLD THREW THE CHAIR AT THE LAWNMOWER MAN'S SCREAMING FAMILIAR, TURNED...



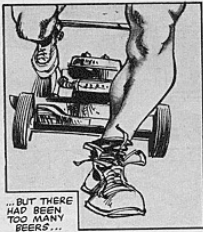
...AND BOLTED OUT THE BACK DOOR. HE HEARD THE MOWER, SMELLED IT, FELT IT, RIGHT AT HIS HEELS.



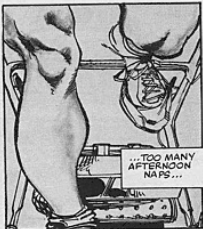
THE LAWNMOWER ROARED OFF THE TOP STEP LIKE A SKIER LEAVING A JUMP.



HAROLD
SPRINTED
ACROSS
HIS NEWLY
CUT BACK
LAWN ...



...BUT THERE
HAD BEEN
TOO MANY
BEERS...



...TOO MANY
AFTERNOON
NAPS...

AND AS THE
LAWNMOWER...

...CAUGHT HIM...

...AND RAN HIM DOWN, HAROLD
KNEW IT REALLY *WAS* TRUE...

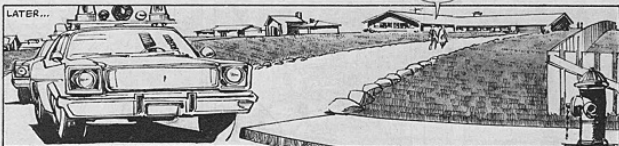


JUST THINK
OF IT AS A
WHOLE-BODY
HAIRCUT,
GOOD BUDDY
--RIGHT?



...THE GREAT
DAYS WERE
GONE.
FOREVER.

LATER...



WHERE'S THE
BODY?



AROUND BACK,
LOOT. ON THE
LAWN. SOME OF
HIM, ANYWAY.

WHAT'S THAT
SUPPOSED
TO MEAN,
OFFICER?



PART OF HIM IS IN
THE BIRDBATH. THE
PRIME CUTS!
YOU MIGHT SAY,
LOOT.



LIEUTENANT GOODWIN
CROSSED THE FRESHLY
MOWN LAWN BACK TO THE
BIRDBATH, REFLECTING
THAT THE WORLD WAS
FULL OF PSYCHOS.



AND STILL HE HAD
TIME TO REFLECT
THAT PARKETTE
MUST HAVE TAKEN
A LOT OF PRIDE IN
HIS HOME... THE
LAWN LOOKED
GREAT.



WELL, LOOT,
LIKE THE IRISHMAN
SAID WHEN HE SAW
THE BLACK-HAIRED
SWEDE: THERE'S A
NORSE OF A DIF-
FERENT COLOR!

GET
OFF IT,
COOLEY!



LIEUTENANT GOODWIN AND OFFICER COOLEY
WENT OFF TO BEGIN QUESTIONING THE NEIGHBORS...
AND BEHIND THEM, THE SCENT OF NEWLY MOWN
GRASS HUNG PLEASANTLY IN THE AIR.



PRELUDE ONE:
THE PEACE OF A
SUMMER'S EVE...

... AS A BOY AND HIS
DOG TAKE THEIR NIGHTLY
WALK.

C'MON, JOAN. HOW LONG
ARE YOU GONNA
BE? I'VE GOT PLACES
TO GO-- PEOPLE TO SEE!



SO DO IT
NOW--OR
FOREVER
HOLD
YOUR--



EXCUSE ME...
SIR, WOULD YOU
PERHAPS HAVE
A LIGHT?

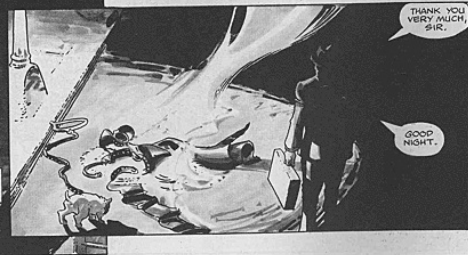
A LIGHT? UH...
HANG ON A MINUTE,
LET ME SEE...



AAARGGH!!



... BROKEN BY THE
SOUND OF BOOTS
ON COBBLED STREETS...



THANK YOU
VERY MUCH,
SIR.

GOOD
NIGHT.

PRELUDE TWO:
THE PEACE OF A
SUMMER'S EVE...

... AND A RISING, SPECTRAL CHANT...

LESLIE... LESLIE... LESLIE...

OPEN UP IN THERE!
THIS IS THE POLICE.

LESLIE... LESLIE... LESLIE...

DAMN IT, I--
SAID OPEN--

LESLIE... LESLIE...

... BROKEN BY THE
SOUND OF SCREAMING
SIRENS, FRANTIC
SHOUTING...

STOMP
STOMP
STOMP

--UP!

KRASH

LESLIE... L

JEEZ! GET A
WINDOW OPEN,
FRANCIS! THAT
SMELL IS--

... OHMYGOD...

E-ED! THAT WOMAN LOOKS
LIKE SHE'S BEEN DEAD FOR
WEEKS!

WHAT IN
HELL IS
GOING ON
HERE?!

... LESLIE... LESLIE... LESLIE...

... WAA

PRELUDE'S END:
THE SEASONS OF A
SUMMER'S EVE...

... BROKEN BY THE SOUND
OF BAT-WINGS OVER CENTRAL
PARK SOUTH...

... A FRENETIC,
CLUMSY FLAPPING
THAT HERALDS THE
COMING OF:

GREENBERG THE VAMPIRE

RED EYES BLAZING,
THE BAT SVOOPS
DOWN TOWARD THE
UPPER FLOORS OF
A GLOOMY, GABLED
APARTMENT HOUSE.

IT ARCS ITS
LEATHERN FORM
TOWARDS ONE
PARTICULAR TERRACE...

...AND MEETS WITH...

THONK

... UNFORSEEN
RESISTANCE!

THERE IS AN ALMOST HUMAN ANGER IN THE CREATURE'S SQUEALING AS IT
BEGINNING TO DISSIPATE, BECOMING A FINE GREY MIST...

STEP THIS WAY,
MISTER KOLCHAK--

... SLIDING ACROSS THE ROOM
TOWARD THE SLEEPING BENIGHTED
FIGURE...

THEN, MIST
BECOMES
MAN.

...SCREAMS...

Y
A
A
A
A

THE FIGURE STARTS...



...AND--SMILES--?

OH--HIYA, UNCLE OSCAR! YOU SURE GOT BACK SOON!

NEVER MIND THAT, MORRIS. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE THAT STUPID TERRACE DOOR OPEN?

I NEARLY CRACKED MY HEAD IN HALF FLYING INTO IT.



HEY, I'M SORRY! BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BITE MY HEAD OFF.

STILL HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE BOOK, HUH?

GETTING OUT AND FLYING AROUND USUALLY HELPS CRACK MY WRITER'S BLOCK. BUT NOT THIS TIME.

YOU'D THINK AFTER TWELVE ACCLAIMED "MASTER-PIECES" OF HORROR I WOULDN'T GO THROUGH THIS EVERY TIME I BEGIN A NEW NOVEL.



RELAX, WILL YOU? YOU'LL RUIN YOUR COOL VAMPIRE IMAGE BY GIVING YOURSELF ULCERS!

GIVE MYSELF ULCERS? I'VE ALREADY GOT 'EM.



IN FACT, I'VE HAD 'EM FOR NINE YEARS NOW...

MAN, WHAT A SCENARIO!

BRIGHT-EYED YOUNG WRITER GOES OFF TO RESEARCH HIS FIRST NOVEL...



...SAID WRITER MEETS A GORGEOUS RED-HEAD AT SATANIST CULT MEETING AND FALLS HEAD OVER HEELS...



HE TAKES HER HOME. SHE TAKES A CHOMP OUT OF HIS NECK THE SIZE OF NEW JERSEY-- AND THE REST IS HISTO--



BANG!

eh?

WELL, SPEAK OF THE DEVIL! LOOKS LIKE THE BAT OF YOUR DREAMS HAS COME A'CALLING!

TRY COMING UNDER THE DOOR, DENISE-- NOT THROUGH IT.



AGAIN, BAT-BECOMES-MUST--AND THEN...

Y'KNOW-- I THINK I REALLY HURT MYSELF.

YOU CAN THANK MY DEAR NEPHEW FOR THAT.



THANK YOU DEAR NEPHEW.

NOW LET'S SEE IF I CAN MAKE YOU FEEL A LITTLE BETTER...

MAMMAE MUCH BETTER...

FOR ONCE, I'D LIKE TO SEE SOMEONE AROUND HERE USE THE FRONT DOOR.



DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING, OSCAR?

NOT A THING.

THAT'S IT! IGNORE YOUR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD AND LISTEN TO THE LADY THAT TURNED YOU INTO AN UNDEAD FREAK! MOST GUYS WOULD'VE PUT A STAKE THROUGH HER HEART-- BUT YOU FELL IN LOVE WITH HER!



MORRIE--



-- DON'T MAKE DEAR UNCLE ANGRY! ANGER MAKES UNCLE THIRSTY-- AND YOUR FATHER WOULDN'T WANT ME TO DRINK HIS ONLY SON FOR BREAKFAST!



HEH-- HEH / L-LOVE THAT SENSE OF HUMOR, UNCLE OSCAR!

OH, WILL YOU GUYS QUIT THE CLOWNING? OSCAR-- YOU KNOW MORRIE CAN'T HELP IT IF HE'S INCURABLY OBNOXIOUS! ANYWAY-- THAT'S HALF HIS CHARM!



NOW KISS AND MAKE UP BEFORE WE'RE LATE!

Y'KNOW-- WHEN YOU'RE RIGHT YOU'RE RIGHT! HIS OBNOXIA IS HIS FINEST TRAIT!



OBNOXIOUS? ME? NEVER!

ALWAYS, MORRIE-- ALWAYS!

AND SO IT GOES...

... DOWN IN THE ELEVATOR, OUT THROUGH THE GARAGE, AND EVENTUALLY, ACROSS THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE INTO THAT FAIRYLED BOROUGH OF EGG CREAMS, STICK FRETZELS, AND "POSE, REM, N' POSE!"

OSCAR GREENBERG WAS BORN AND RAISED IN BROOKLYN-- AND JUST THE SIGHT OF HIS HOME TURNED BRINGS BACK VIVID REMINDERS OF THE YEARS OF INNOCENCE BEFORE FAME (AND ITS CONCOMITANT DEBAUCHERIES) CHANGED HIS LIFE FOREVER...

A CENTRAL FOCUS OF THOSE DAYS WAS GREENBERG'S KOSHER MEATS ON FLATBUSH AVENUE, ONCE THE DOMAIN OF HIS LATE FATHER, NAT...

... NOW THE EXCLUSIVE TERRITORY OF HIS OLDER BROTHER...

... IRA!
HOW ARE YOU DOING?

DOING? HOW SHOULD I BE DOING? YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE HERE AN HOUR AGO!



IT'S NOT SAFE TO BE OPEN AFTER TEN IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, YOU KNOW!

BUT WHY SHOULD YOU CARE? BIG SHOT WRITER WITH THE FANCY CAR AND THE PRETTY GIRLFRIEND!



MORRIE-- COME IN THE BACK AND GIVE ME A HAND WITH YOUR UNCLE'S-- YOU KNOW...

SOME THINGS ARE ALWAYS THE SAME...

AW, HE'S CUTE!

HEY, POP-- COOL YOUR JETS!

COOL MY WHAT?

YOU'VE CHANGED SINCE YOU MOVED IN WITH YOUR UNCLE, MORRIE. YOUR MOUTH GOT BIGGER!

JUST GIMME THE JARS, POP.



ACH, THESE JARS! TO THINK I HAVE TO GIVE MY OWN BABY BROTHER ANIMAL BLOOD SO THAT HE WON'T... DO THINGS TO PEOPLE!

IT'S A SHONDA!*

* A SHAME-- PENNY.

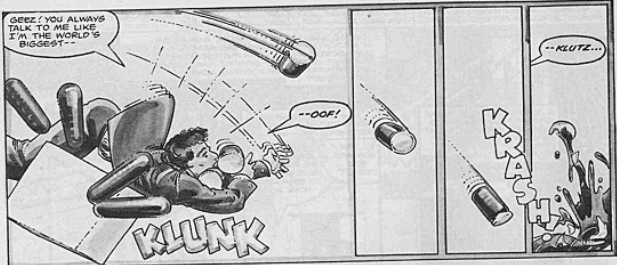


COME ON, POP-- YOU KNOW UNCLE OSCAR WOULD NEVER PUT THE BITE ON ANYBODY!

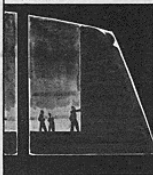
SHUT UP AND WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING.



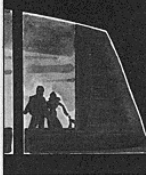
I'M WATCHING I'M WATCHING



INTERLUDE ONE: THEY
MET IN THE BAR.



HAD A FEW DRINKS.



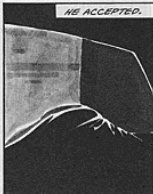
SHE OFFERED.



HEADED OUT BACK.



HE ACCEPTED.



HE OFFERED.



SHE DECLINED.



TOO LATE.



INTERLUDE ONE ENDS.

... SO I BIT HIM!
HAHAHAHAHA!

OH, OSCAR-- THAT
IS TEEHEEHEE! THE
OLDEST JOKE IN
THE BOOK.

YEAH! HIC (BUT
AFTER SEVEN
SCREENDRIVERS--
WHO CARES?)

SURE
MELLOWED POP OUT,
TOO.



NOW! HIC!
LESBIEH
WHAT'S ON
THE TUBE?

YOU DO THAT, NEPHEW--
DENISE AN' I ARE GONNA
GET SOME WHOOPEE--
TIME IN BEFORE THE SUN
COMES UP!

OSCAR,
WHEN YOU'RE
BOMBED YOU
ARE SO CRU--



... FOLLOWERS OF
MEDITATION TEACHER
LESLIE TOWNSEND--

TOWNSEND?
LESLIE
TOWNSEND?

HOLD ON
A MINUTE,
OSCAR.



WHAT'S THE
INTEREST,
DENISE? YOU
HIC! KNOW
THIS GUY
TOWNSEND?

WOMAN, SHE'S A
RESPECTED SPIRITUAL
TEACHER. I BELONGED
TO A MEDITATION GROUP
OF HER'S A FEW
YEARS AGO.

WHICH GROUP
WAS THAT
DENISE? YOU'VE
BELONGED TO
EVERY FRINGE
GROUP THIS SIDE
OF BOMBAY IN YOUR
SEARCH FOR SALVATION!





≡KLICK≡

OSCAR--LESLIE WAS
MY FRIEND... MY
MENTOR! THESE
ARE PEOPLE WE'RE
TALKING ABOUT, NOT
CHARACTERS IN A
NOVEL!



INTERLUDE TWO:

HE HAS SLAIN TWO ENEMIES TONIGHT...



... BUT THAT FACT GIVES HIM LITTLE SATISFACTION.



THERE IS NO TIME TO REST...



... NO TIME TO SAVOR THE TASTE OF TRIUMPH.



HIS RAGE WILL NOT PERMIT IT.



ALTHOUGH THE YEARS WEIGH HEAVILY UPON HIM...



... THERE IS STILL SO MUCH MORE TO DO.



SO MUCH MORE.



INTERLUDE TWO ENDS.

GREENBERG WAS FINISHING A BREAKFAST OF CHILLED BLOOD, BURNT TOAST AND RINKY EGGS WHEN DENISE CALLED WITH HEARTENING NEWS: LESLIE TOWNSEND HAD AGREED TO SEE THEM, IN ONE HOUR.

AND THERE IS OTHER NEWS TO BE REVEALED ALONG THE WAY.



FIVE YEARS AGO, TOWNSEND WENT UPSTATE ON A FOUR-DAY YOGA RETREAT RUN BY SOME DOPEY SWAMI. SOON AS SHE GETS BACK-- SHE STARTS TEACHING MEDITATION. GREAT TRAINING, huh?

THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT, MORRIE. LESLIE CLAIMED THAT, DURING THE YOGA, INTENSIVE, AN... uh... ASTRAL BEING APPEARED TO HER AND TOLD HER THE SWAMI WAS DOING THINGS ALL WRONG-- AND THAT SHE'D BEEN PICKED TO SHOW THE WORLD THE RIGHT WAY TO MEDITATE.

YEAH, WELL-- I WAS GETTING TO THAT.

OF COURSE, YOU WERE.

CAN I GO ON, PLEASE?

CAN WE STOP YOU?



IF YOU'RE SO SMART, DENISE-- HOWCUM YOU DON'T KNOW THAT YOUR OLD PAL NOW CLAIMS SHE'S AN AVATAR-- AN INCARNATION OF GOO COME TO REDEEM MANKIND?

THAT'S NOT ALL, SEEMS THE DIVINE MS. T'S BEEN SPENDING MONEY LIKE WATER THE PAST FEW YEARS. SHE'S ALMOST BROKE-- THAT CHICK TINA WAS FOOTING MOST OF THE BILLS... INCLUDING A BIG ONE FOR A MUCHO EXPENSIVE FIFTY ACRE LESLIE TOWNSEND TEMPLE IN PUTNAM COUNTY.

BUT I'D HEARD RUMORS THAT LESLIE AND TINA WERE ON THE VERGE OF BREAKING UP-- THAT TINA WANTED OUT OF THE RELATIONSHIP.

YOU HEARD RIGHT--

Y'KNOW, THIS IS ALL BEGINNING TO MAKE A PERVERTED KIND OF SENSE.



WHAT?!

IF TINA'S MONEY WAS KEEPING
TOWNSEND'S RELIGION AFLOAT
AND TINA WAS PULLING
OUT, THEN --

OUTTA
THE WAY,
SHMUCK.

HEY--
WATCH
IT!

BUMP

NO-- YOU WATCH IT,
SHMUCK-- BEFORE YOU LOSE
ALL YOUR TEETH. GOT IT?
OR DO YOU WANT A
DEMONSTRATION?

THAT'S MY NEPHEW
YOU'RE TALKING TO
LIKE THAT, BUDDY.

MY NEPHEW.

NOW ARE
YOU GOING TO
APOLOGIZE
TO HIM--

H-H-HEY--!

--OR AM I
GOING TO
HAVE TO KILL
YOU ?!!!

YOWWWW

OSCAR--PLEASE...STOP IT! STOP IT!

I... WANT HIM, DENISE...
I WANT HIS BLOOD.
I WANT TO RIP OUT HIS
THROAT...

DENISE--WHAT'S
THE MATTER WITH
HIM?! I'VE NEVER
SEEN HIM LIKE
THIS!

H-HE'LL BE ALL
RIGHT IN A MINUTE.
IT'S JUST THAT
SOMETIMES VIOLENT
EMOTIONS BRING
OUT THAT
SIDE OF US...

IT'S OKAY NOW, OSCAR. IT'S OKAY...

DENISE... I FEEL SO ASHAMED...

DON'T WORRY, HONEY.
I'M HERE. YOU'RE
FINE NOW...

EVERYTHING'S
JUST FINE...



THIS APARTMENT BUILDING WAS OWNED BY LESLIE TOWNSHEND'S LATE HUSBAND, MORTIMER. WHEN HE DIED, HIS WIDOW PROMPTLY EVICTED ALL THE BUILDING'S TENANTS, RECHRISTENED IT "THE TOWNSHEND ARMS" AND TRANSFORMED IT INTO A PRIVATE CASTLE.

ALTHOUGH NOW THAT CASTLE IS MORE OF A SHRINE...



WON'T YOU STEP THIS WAY, PLEASE--

--HER HOLINESS AWAITS US ON THE SIXTH FLOOR.

SIXTH FLOOR? I THOUGHT THAT WAS MEN'S WEAR!

THE ELEVATOR DOORS CLOSE BEHIND THEM, THEN REOPEN TO REVEAL A SIGHT THAT LEAVES EVEN THE GARRULOUS MORRIE TOTALLY SPEECHLESS...

WELCOME, DENISE, TO MY ABODE! WELCOME INTO MY LIGHT AND LOVE!

I AM ESPECIALLY PLEASED TO SEE YOU, Mr. GREENBERG.

LESLIE--WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME IS GOING ON HERE?!

IT IS ALL IN HEAVEN'S NAME, DEAR CHILD!

BUT I SENSE A GREAT DISTURBANCE IN YOUR SOUL--

--NO DOUBT YOU WISH TO KNOW ABOUT POOR UNFORTUNATE TINA.

ACCORDING TO THE POLICE--WHO HAVE, I SHOULD POINT OUT, CLEARED ME OF ANY INVOLVEMENT IN THIS--OUR TINA COMMITTED SUICIDE SOME WEEKS AGO. HER BODY WAS DISCOVERED BY SOME DISCIPLES OF MINE WHO DECIDED TO PROVE MY DIVINITY BY USING REPETITION OF MY NAME TO...RESURRECT TINA. ALAS, THEIR FAITH WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH...

BUT COME--THERE IS NO ROOM IN LOVE'S HEART FOR GRIEF!



SILKEN ROBES RUSTLING, TOWNSHEND LEADS HER VISITORS ON A TOUR OF THE PREMISES...

Uh-- Mrs. TOWNSHEND--I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE--

MY VIDEO CREWS? FOR A YEAR, EVERYTHING I HAVE DONE OR SAID HAS BEEN FILMED. WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR ME TO REVEAL MY GLORIOUS SELF TO THE WORLD, MY WISDOM WILL BE EVERY MAN'S TO SHARE! ON TAPE--

--FOR A PRICE?

LESLIE--WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE?



PROVE? WHY, NOTHING. ALL THE PROOF IS HERE--IN THESE SPECIALLY-COMMISSIONED PAINTINGS WHICH DETAIL THE MOMENT WHEN MY DIVINE STATE BECAME KNOWN TO ME BY AN ANGEL OF GOD. PRINTS ARE AVAILABLE...

THIS IS SHEER NONSENSE! YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY BELIEVE THIS!

BUT THE WOMAN'S ONLY REPLY IS A CRYPTIC SMILE--AND AN INDECIPHERABLE STARE THAT SENDS A CHILL UP DENISE'S SPINE...



BUT THAT CHILL SOON GIVES WAY TO OTHER ASTONISHMENT...

THIS IS OUR CENTRAL CONTROL COMPLEX... OUR VIDEO TAPE LIBRARY... EQUIPMENT REPAIR SHOP...

BY THE WAY, MR. GREENBERG-- DO YOU KNOW I'VE READ "THE BLOOD OF MRS. MORRIS" FIVE TIMES?

REALLY? THE CRITICS CONSIDER THAT MY WORST BOOK.

PHILISTINES! THEY FAIL TO RECOGNIZE YOUR GENIUS!

THAT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS SAID...

AND, PRESENTLY, IN THE "THRONE ROOM"...

MR. GREENBERG-- I KNOW YOU THINK IT WAS CURIOSITY THAT DREW YOU HERE-- BUT I KNOW IT WAS MY DIVINE WILL.

YOU ARE VERY DEAR TO ME-- ALTHOUGH YOU YOURSELF MAY NOT REALIZE IT YET.

THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TO HAVE... THIS!

WEAR THIS SACRED SYMBOL AND I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS...

...um...

...WELL...

NOW, NOW-- THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR...

I'LL SAY! IF THIS MEDALLION WAS "SACRED," TO HAVE A FRENCH-FRIED CHEST AGAIN! BUT THIS IS NO MORE HOLY THAN YOU ARE, LADY!

NOW GO, MY CHILDREN-- WE SHALL MEET AGAIN ANOTHER DAY. MY DIVINE DUTIES HAVE MADE ME EXTREMELY TIRED.

Oh, LES-LIE--!

OY YE?

AND, AFTER "HER HOLINESS" HAS SHOWN THE TRIO OUT...

I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A WALL OF INSUFFERABLE EGO IN ALL MY LIFE! THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND, SHE MUST HAVE BEEN BEHIND TINA'S DEATH...

BUT WHAT WOULD SHE GAIN BY IT?

WELL, FOR ONE THING, GUESS WHO INHERITS TINA'S FORTUNE...

"MORRIE-- WHY DON'T YOU HEAD HOME AND CATCH UP ON YOUR SLEEP? DENISE AND I ARE GOING TO SEE SOME FRIENDS-- AND THEN PAY A RETURN CALL ON OUR LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD MESSIAH..."

I KNOW UNCLE OSCAR WAS BRUSHING ME OFF 'CAUSE THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET DANGEROUS-- BUT THIS IS ONE TIME I DON'T MIND!

THAT TOWNSEND GAVE ME THE *WILLIES*! IT WAS LIKE HANGING AROUND WITH BELA LUGOSI... OR RICHARD NIXON! I COULDN'T THINK OF ONE WITTY THING TO SAY!

I JUST HOPE THAT UNCLE OSCAR AND DENISE DON'T GET THEM--

Mr. MORRIS JACOB GREENBERG?

HUH? YEAH-- THAT'S ME. WHO'RE YOU?

DESTINY.

POPULAR LORE TO THE CONTRARY, VAMPIRES ARE NOT SOLITARY CREATURES THAT THRIVE ON SHADOWS AND SECRECY.

THEY ARE -- LIKE ANY MINORITY -- SOCIAL BEINGS WHO DESPERATELY NEED OTHERS OF THEIR OWN KIND TO REASSURE THEM THAT SOCIETY'S PORTRAIT OF THEM IS A LIE...

AND THEY ADORE A GOOD PARTY...

...LEOPOLD-- HOW YA DOIN', BUDDY?

BOB'S ALWAYS LATE, LEE.

ACTUALLY, I'M WORRIED SICK. BOB'S LATE.

Oh, I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT LOVE DOES TEND TO MAKE ONE NEUROTIC. DON'T YOU AGREE?

YEAH, WELL-- HEY! JIM, HOW GOES IT?

NOT BAD. MAN, YO, DENISE, BABY-- HOW'DABOUT TRIPPING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC.

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.

JIM BECOMES MIST, THEN MAN-- AND USHERS DENISE OFF ONTO THE DANCE FLOOR...

THAT GUY GETS A LITTLE TOO TOUCHY-FEELY FOR MY TASTES. HE'S ALWAYS HAD A THING FOR DENISE.

YOU'RE BEING SILLY, OSCAR. YOU AND DENISE -- YOU'RE ONE SOUL -- INVOLUBLE, INSEPARABLE, LIKE BOB AND ME...

"NOW STOP POUTING AND COME INTO THE STUDY. THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO SEE..."

WHAT'S THIS?
"DEEP THROAT?"
"BAMBI GOES
TO AN ORGY?"



HARDLY. IT'S A TALK-SHOW I VIDEO-TAPED LAST NIGHT. I THINK YOU'LL FIND THE GUEST... MOST INTERESTING.

NOT FUNNY, LEOPOLD. NOT FUNNY AT ALL.

Oh, come now, Oscar--he's just a kook! A mindless loon who's accidentally stumbled across a few truths!



PERSONALLY, I WAS ROLLING ON THE FLOOR WHEN--

... SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BOYS-- BUT SOMEONE LEFT THIS PACKAGE AT THE FRONT DOOR FOR LEE...

FOR ME? A GIFT? HOW WONDERFUL!



MY NEXT GUEST IS
= HA-HA =
WELL, TO TELL YA
THE TRUTH, FOLKS--

--HE CLAIMS TO BE THIS COUNTRY'S FOREMOST VAMPIRE HUNTER!

SO... oh... WOULD YOU WELCOME... Mr. X?

CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!

WELL, LET'S FACE IT, Mr. X--HOW THE HECK IS OL' TOM SUPPOSED TO TAKE SUCH A WILD CLAIM SERIOUSLY?

YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE IN VAMPIRES, NOW DO YOU?

BUT I WILL NOT REST UNTIL EVERY LAST BLOOD-SUCKER IS STAMPED OUT--

KLIK



YOU CAN GUESS WHY HE DOESN'T WANT HIS FACE SHOWN ON TELEVISION AND WHY WE'RE ELECTRONICALLY DISTORTING HIS VOICE! ANYTHING HE MIGHT SAY IS ONLY HIS OPINION, OF COURSE.



YOU... SEEM TO THINK THIS IS FUNNY, Mr. SNYDE...



I DO, INDEED, Mr. SNYDE... I HAVE BEEN STALKING THE UNDEAD FOR FORTY YEARS, SINCE THEY TOOK MY SISTER.



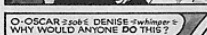
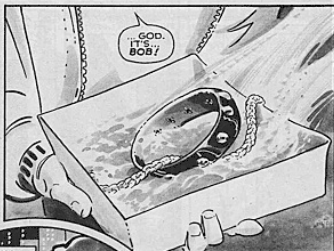
MANY FAMED RECLUSES, LIKE J.D. SALINGER, GRETA GARBO, AND OSCAR GREENBERG, HIDE FROM THE PRESS BECAUSE OF THEIR VAMPIRIC WAYS!

I JUST KNOW IT'S FROM BOB. HE'S ALWAYS DOING SOMETHING LIKE THIS WHEN HE'S COMMITTED A FAUX PAS.

Oh, I WONDER WHAT IT COULD--



NO.



THE TWO BATS SOAR THROUGH THE AIR WITH PURPOSE...

...ARcing THEIR LEATHERN FORMS TOWARD THE IMPOSING "TOWNSEND ARMS."

THEY PAUSE, FLAPPING AND FLUTTERING, OUTSIDE A SMALL VENT.

THEN THEIR BODIES DISSOLVE INTO MIST, SLIPPING THROUGH THE VENT...

...AND INTO A CERTAIN VIDEO STORAGE ROOM...

...WHERE FLESH AGAIN EMERGES FROM FOG.

I FEEL SICK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO BOB... BUT THIS HAS GOT TO TAKE PRIORITY.

YEAH. I KNOW. I JUST HOPE LEE UNDERSTANDS.

HEY! IT LOOKS LIKE HALF THE STUFF IN HERE HAS BEEN PACKED UP-- LIKE LESLIE WAS PLANNING ON TAKING OFF. MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THIS AFTER ALL.



AND, VOILÀ, OSCAR GREENBERG, BOY DETECTIVE, HITS THE JACKPOT!

TINA'S FAREWELL

I'M REALLY DREADING THIS, OSCAR.

I KNOW THIS ISN'T EASY FOR YOU, BABE-- BUT WE'VE GOT TO KNOW FOR SURE...

NOW, IF I CAN JUST REMEMBER HOW TO THREAD ONE OF THESE GIZMOS. 1-- HEY, I DID IT! CHECK THIS OUT. IT LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF WEIRDO RITUAL...



ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE TURNED AGAINST ME IN LIFE, YOU MAY SERVE ME STILL... IN DEATH.

HOW MAY I SERVE YOU, O GREAT ONE...



YOU WILL GO HOME NOW, DEAR TINA-- PREPARE A WARM BATH, THEN YOU WILL TAKE THE SHARPEST BLADE YOU OWN AND SLICE YOUR PALE FLESH--



O OSCAR-- THAT'S TINA!

LISTEN WELL, YOU WHO HAVE BETRAYED YOUR SAVIOR. YOUR WILL IS GONE-- SWALLOWED BY THE GREATER WILL OF YOUR LORD AND MASTER!



YOU HAVE ALREADY FOLLOWED MY INSTRUCTIONS AND MADE ME THE BENEFICIARY OF YOUR RICHES. NOW YOU MUST FINISH THIS DIVINE PLAN OF MINE...



-- LETTING YOUR BLOOD MINGLE WITH THE WATERS-- LETTING LIFE FLOW OUT AND AWAY, AWAY... AWAY... AWAY...



OH, GOD! OH, GOD! THEY MUST HAVE GIVEN TINA MIND-ALTERING DRUGS--USED HYPNOSIS ON HER! HOW COULD LESLIE HAVE DONE THIS? SHE LOVED TINA!

IT'S PRETTY CLEAR THAT THE TINA YOU KNEW DOESN'T EXIST ANY MORE. SHE'S GONE FROM LOVABLE ECCENTRIC TO HOMICIDAL MANIAC IN ONE DISGUSTING LEAP!

WE'VE GOTTA CALL THE COPS, DENISE.

I THINK NOT, MR. GREENBERG.

LESLIE!
WHAT?!

WHAT A SHAME. I HAD HOPED TO WIN YOU BOTH OVER TO MY SIDE. BUT I SEE THAT EVEN GOD-IN-HUMAN-FORM CAN ERR.

"TAKE THEM, LADIES!"

THAT THE TWO AMAZONIAN GUARDS ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO TAKE ANY AVERAGE PERSON'S CLEAR FROM THE FIRST RIB-CRUSHING GRIP...

... BUT THE UNDEAD GRIP OF OSCAR GREENBERG AND DENISE KEATON IS DECIDEDLY MORE THAN AVERAGE. AND SO...

HMMMM... I SEE THAT THIS CALLS FOR SPECIAL MEASURES. BACK AWAY, LADIES--

-- LET YOUR LORD HANDLE THIS!

CARE FOR A CRUCIFIX, DEAR ONES?

YES. I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU, MR. GREENBERG. DENISE CONFIDED IN ME QUITE COMPLETELY IN THE DAYS BEFORE SATAN TURNED HER AGAINST ME.

YARGH!

NO!

THERE IS BLINDING LIGHT THAT ONLY A VAMPIRE SEES; INEFFABLE AGONY THAT ONLY A VAMPIRE FEELS...

BUT, IN MY ETERNAL COMPASSION, I OFFER YOU A CHOICE: LEAVE NOW AND FORGET WHAT YOU'VE SEEN--OR I SHALL HOLD YOU HERE 'TIL DAWN--



MORRIE HAS PRECIOUS LITTLE STRENGTH LEFT TO RESIST AND SO, SIX FLIGHTS LATER...

EVERYBODY
STAY RIGHT
WHERE
THEY ARE!

WHO--?!

LESLIE
TOWNSHEND
SPINS,
STARTLED...

...AND OSCAR
GREENBERG
LEAPS FOR
THE CROSS!

GOT IT!

NOW IF I
SYNCHRO CAN
JUST TROOP GET
RID OF THE
DAMN THING
BEFORE IT
--snaps--
BURNS MY
HANDS OFF!
THERE!

Slight GOOD WORK, MORRIE!
THIS CRAZY DIVERSION OF
YOURS SAVED OUR TAILS!

ONE MOVE,
LESLIE--
JUST ONE
MOVE--
AND I'LL
BREAK
YOUR
NECK!

I CAN ASSURE YOU,
SCUM, THAT THIS IS
NO DIVERSION!

H-HE MEANS IT,
UNCLE OSCAR!
H-HE'S GONNA KILL
US! D-DEAD!

Uh-oh.
Mr. X, I
PRESUME?

WHO I AM IS UNIMPORTANT. WHAT'S
IMPORTANT IS RIDDING THE WORLD OF
YOU AND YOUR FILTHY KIND.

MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY.
TRULY THIS IS MY DIVINE
WILL IN--

LESLIE--
WILL YOU
JUST SHUT
YOUR
MOUTH!

...DENISE...?

SOMETHING IN THAT VOICE GIVES THE
VAMPIRE-HUNTER PAUSE, MAKES HIM TURN...

...ARTHUR...?

BROTHER AND SISTER STARE DEEP INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES, MESMERIZED BY THE VISIONS OF YESTER-DAY REFLECTED THERE...

...VISIONS OF A 17 YEAR OLD GIRL WHO OPENED THE DOOR FOR THE WRONG MEN ONE STORMY NIGHT, VISIONS OF FANGS PIERCING FLESH; OF LIFE BEING DRAINED; OF A BROTHER WHO WATCHED IN HORROR BUT COULD NOT ACT.

THAT NIGHT ARTHUR KEATON VOWED TO WIPE OUT THE UNDEAD DISEASE THAT HAD TAKEN DENISE... BUT NEVER ONCE IN THE FORTY YEARS SINCE HAS HE ADMITTED TO HIMSELF THAT THE SISTER HE SO LOVED... HAD BECOME ONE OF THE CREATURES HE SO HATES...

NEVER...

...UNTIL NOW!

BUT THEN, ALL VISIONS ARE SHATTERED...

... BY THE ENTRANCE OF A PUTRESCENT, NIGHTMARE-FIGURE THAT COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE THERE...

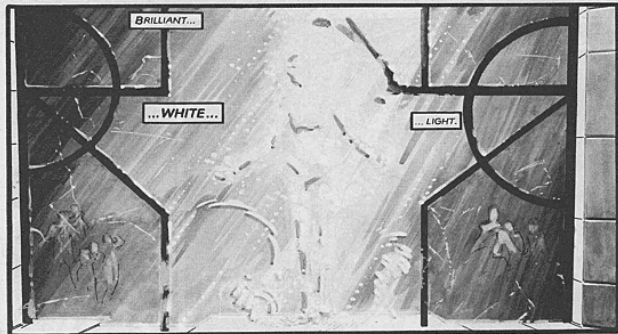
... BUT IS!

TINA!!!

THEN, WITH HIDEOUS, AWKWARD STEPS, IT LURCHES FORWARD TOWARD THE PETRIFIED LESLIE TOWNSHEND, REACHING OUT WITH GNARLED, BONY HANDS...

N-N-NO, TINA! PLEASE!

THE FIGURE SLOWLY NODS ITS ROTTEN HEAD; MOTTLED SKIN FLAKING TO THE FLOOR, JAW WORKING SOUNDLESSLY.





LESLIE!
LESLIE!
YOU CAN'T
BE DEAD!

WH-WHAT'S
HAPPENING?
WHAT'S
HAPPENING?!

ARTHUR--
COME ON!
WE'VE GOT
TO GET OUT
OF HERE!



OKAY, LADIES--
YOU'D BETTER
COME WITH US!
YOU CAN'T
HELP YOUR--
GOD NOW!

CAREFUL
WHERE YOU
POINT THAT
BOZO'S GUN,
UNCLE OSCAR.
YOU MIGHT
SHOOT YOUR-
SELF, OR ME!



IT'S THE
HAND OF GOD.
THE HAND
OF GOD.



"THE
HAND
OF
GOD...!"

LATER, AS SIX STUNNED AND SHAKEN
PEOPLE GATHER IN OSCAR
GREENBERG'S PENTHOUSE...



THIS IS --
INCREDIBLE!
SHE'S GONE!
OUR LESLIE
IS... GONE!

KILLED BY
A M-MONSTER
FROM BEYOND
THE GRAVE!

IF YOU LADIES DON'T WANT TO END
UP SPENDING TIME IN THE PSYCHO
WARD-- YOU'D BETTER TELL THE COPS
THAT TOWNSEND COMMITTED SUICIDE--
AND LEAVE IT AT THAT!

BUT WE DID SEE
IT, UNCLE OSCAR--
ARE WE ALL
NUTS?

SHHH.
EASY,
ARTHUR.
WE'RE TO-
GETHER
NOW. IT'LL
BE ALL
RIGHT.

Y'KNOW, THE BEST I CAN FIGURE IS THAT TOWNSHEND'S DISCIPLES' FAITH WAS SO STRONG THAT THEY ACTUALLY DID WHAT THEY SET OUT TO DO: THEY RAISED THE DEAD!

MAYBE, OSCAR. OR MAYBE THE REAL GOD WAS SO AFFRONTED BY LESLIE'S CLAIM OF DIVINITY THAT HE SENT TINA BACK AS AN ACT OF--

-- HOLY RETRIBUTION?



YOU GUYS ARE GETTING TOO DEEP FOR ME! WHAT SAY I TAKE THESE DEAR DISCIPLES OUT FOR A FEW DRINKS... AND TRY TO FORGET THIS WHOLE NIGHT!

BETTER YOU SHOULD TAKE THEM DOWN TO THE LOCAL PRECINCT. MORRIE-- AND THEN GO LEAK OUR "SUICIDE" STORY TO YOUR VILLAGE PAPER.

NOW, THERE'S JUST ONE OTHER PROBLEM.

IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT ARTHUR, OSCAR-- DON'T. HE'S... SICK. I'LL SEE THAT HE GETS HELP.

AFTER OUR PARENTS DIED, HE TOOK CARE OF ME FOR SO LONG-- I GUESS ITS TIME I RETURNED THE FAVOR...

SWELL! THEN I GUESS THIS GRISLY EPISODE HAD A FEW BRIGHT SPOTS TO IT! I'VE EVEN GOT ENOUGH FODDER TO REALLY GET MY NOVEL GOING!



NOW, FOLKS-- IT'S ALMOST SUNRISE AND I AM... uh... DEAD TIRED! CARE TO STAY THE DAY, DENISE?

NOT TO WORRY! I JUST BUILT A NEW ONE-- QUAD SPEAKERS-- VELVET LINING-- AND IT OPENS UP INTO A DOUBLE!

SURE, BABY-- BUT THAT COFFIN OF YOURS IS SOOO CRAMPED!

Oh, OSCAR!

AND THEY SLEPT ALL THROUGH THE DAY... AND LONG INTO THE NIGHT.

FINIS.

MIRROR, MIRROR



THE YEAR IS 1927. ROBERT E. BYRD IS COMMANDING THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER THE SOUTH POLE. PRESIDENT COOLIDGE IS DRESSING UP IN WAR BONNETS. BILLY MITCHELL IS DEMANDING AN INDEPENDENT AIR FORCE. "SHIPWRECK" KELLY IS SETTING FLAGPOLE-BUTTONS RECORDS. BESSIE SMITH IS ON THE RADIO. GEORGE GERSHWIN IS WRITING "SWINGING JAZZ." PENNEY AND TUNNEY ARE BLUSSING IT OUT IN SOLDIER'S FIELD. AL CAPONE IS STAGING ELABORATE FUNERALS. YOUR MOTHER LOVES MAH-JONG AND YOUR FATHER HAS JUST MOVED THE FAMILY FROM TWELVE WONDERFUL YEARS IN CINCINNATI TO THIS AWFUL NEIGHBORHOOD IN VERMONT.

YOUR NAME IS MICHAEL CAMPBELL. YOU ARE THIRTEEN YEARS OLD. YOU ARE ABOUT TO GO DOWN TO THE FIRST BREAKFAST IN YOUR NEW HOUSE. YOU'RE MISERABLE. AND IT IS ALL CAROLINE'S FAULT.



CAROLINE IS YOUR SISTER -- OR HALF-SISTER, RATHER. FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, YOUR MOTHER HAD GIVEN ILLEGITIMATE BIRTH TO HER AND PUT HER UP FOR ADOPTION.



FOR MOST OF THOSE FIFTEEN YEARS CAROLINE HAD BEEN SHUFFLED FROM FOSTER HOME TO ORPHANAGE WHILE YOUR MOTHER, NOW MARRIED TO AN UNDERSTANDING AND FORGIVING MAN, SEARCHED FOR HER.

FINALLY, THIS SUMMER, YOUR PARENTS LOCATED CAROLINE IN A JUVENILE HOME, WENT TO COURT, AND GAINED LEGAL CUSTODY OF HER...



CAROLINE CAME TO LIVE WITH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN YOUR NEW HOME... TO START A NEW LIFE...



CAROLINE IS WITHDRAWN, BUT SWEET AND EASIER TO BE LOVED. SHE TREATS YOU EXACTLY AS A LOVING, OLDER SISTER WOULD TREAT A YOUNGER BROTHER...

AND YET YOU HATE HER!...WITH ALL THE PASSION OF AN ONLY CHILD WHO HAS NEVER HAD TO SHARE HIS PARENTS' AFFECTION...

YOU THINK ABOUT HER AS YOU SKIP DOWN THE STAIRS TO BREAKFAST...



...YOU DON'T SEE THE STACK OF MAGAZINES ON THE THIRD STEP... CAROLINE'S STUPID MOVIE MAGAZINES...

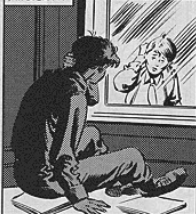
THE WORLD SPINS OVER AND OVER, STAIRS, CEILING, STAIRS, CEILING, STAIRS... A ROARING SOUND FILLS YOUR EARS... THEN BLACKNESS, TOTAL AND COMPLETE...



THE FIRST FAINT STIRRINGS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: SOUNDS FROM THE KITCHEN, THE SMELL OF FRYING BACON...



YOUR EYELIDS FLUTTER OPEN. YOU SIT UP, BLINKING AT YOUR REFLECTION IN THE FLOOR-LENGTH HALL MIRROR...



THE IMAGE OF YOUR CONFUSED FACE STARES BACK AT YOU... THEN SUDDENLY YOU FIND YOURSELF GAZING IN SHOCKED AWE AT A COLLAGE OF DISTORTED REFLECTIONS...



... THE GLINT OF A KNIFE IN A CLENCHED FIST, THE GLASH OF A BLADE TEARING THROUGH FLESH, BLOOD SPATTERING IN A CRIMSON SHOWER ACROSS THE WALL, THE BODY OF A BLURRED FIGURE, A CLAY-LIKE HAND, FINGERS CURLED IN ANGRY STILLNESS...



AND AS QUICKLY AS THEY COME, THE NIGHTMARE IMAGES EVAPORATE... AND CAROLINE IS BEHIND YOU...

MICHAEL, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

BETTER CALL THE DOCTOR...

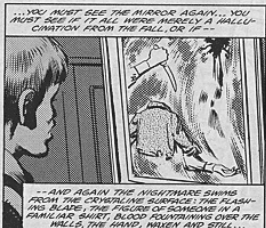


THEY-- NO CONCUSSION, MRS. CAMPBELL, BUT I'D KEEP HIM IN BED TODAY.

THANK YOU, DOCTOR.



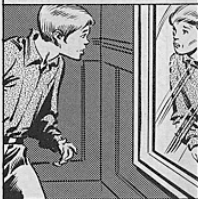
BUT YOU HAVE NO INTENTION OF STAYING IN BED...



...YOU MUST SEE THE MIRROR AGAIN... YOU MUST SEE IF IT ALL WERE MERELY A HALLUCINATION FROM THE FALL, OR IF--

--AND AGAIN THE NIGHTMARE SHIMS FROM THE CRYSTALLINE SURFACE: THE FLASHING BLADE, THE FIGURE OF SOMEONE IN A FAMILIAR SHIRT, BLOOD FOUNTAINING OVER THE WALLS, THE HAND, NAKED AND STILL...

YOU STAND TREMBLING BEFORE THE MIRROR, WHICH NOW REFLECTS ONLY YOU, YOUR YOUNG FACE ASHEN, STARRING AT THE SAME SHIRT YOU SAW MOMENTS AGO IN THE MIRROR, THE SHIRT, HORN BY THE ARM THAT WIELDED THE KNIFE...



I MUST BE NUTS! THAT KNOCK ON THE HEAD--

IT COULDN'T BE ME WITH THAT KNIFE! I WOULDN'T KILL ANYONE! WOULD I?



YOU TEAR OFF THE SHIRT, THROW IT INTO THE LAUNDRY ROOM...

YOU SHOULDN'T BE OUT OF BED, MICHAEL.



YOU SHOULDN'T BE SNEAKING UP ON PEOPLE, CAROLINE!

THANK GOD, SHE'S GOING OUT OF TOWN WITH MOM AND DAD FOR THE WEEKEND.



SLEEP WILL NOT COME THAT NIGHT. THE HELLSH IMAGES FROM THE MURDER HAUNT YOU, FILLING THE DARK BED-ROOM WITH SCENES OF CRAWLING HORROR...



AT LAST, YOU CREEP FROM BED AND STEAL DOWN THE SHADOW-LAUREN STAIRCASE, FEELING YOUR WAY ALONG THE BANISTER...



YOU STOP BEFORE THE MIRROR, YOU WAIT, HOLDING YOUR BREATH... EXPECTANTLY...



A DIM FORM COALESCE ON THE FOGGY SURFACE... IT IS AN ARM REACHING THE SAME SHIRT-A BE-FORE, HOLDING THE KNIFE... BEFORE IT IS A BLURRED, INDISCERNABLE FACE...



...A FACE THAT GRADUALLY SWIMS INTO FOCUS...



...THE FACE OF YOUR SISTER, CAROLINE!

YOU STAND BEFORE THE SHIMMERING GLASS, MESMERIZED. THE BLADE SLASHES CRUELLY. BLOOD RED-CHIE'S UNFAMILIAR WALLS, AND THE IMAGE OF YOUR SISTER'S FACE, HAND TWISTED CLAW-LIKE BESIDE HER, EYES STARRING VACUOUSLY INTO YOUR OWN...



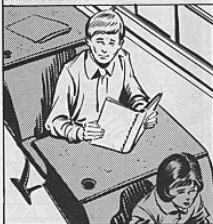
AND FINALLY YOUR OWN IMAGE, STANDING BEFORE THE MIRROR EVEN AS YOU ARE NOW, SHIRT TORN AND BLOODY, BLADE DRIPPING REPLY IN YOUR HAND.



YOU GLANCE AT THE IMAGE AGAIN - SOMETHING IS FORMING BEHIND IT NOW... A CALENDAR... AND A DATE. YOU SQUINT YOUR EYES AND LOOK CLOSELY. ONE NUMERICAL GLOVE BESIDES THEM. THE REST, THE FOURTH...



AT SCHOOL YOU WATCH THE CLOCK. MOTHER SAID THAT THE THREE OF THEM WERE LEAVING AT NOON. NOON COMES AND A SEIZURE OF RELIEF WASHES OVER YOU...



YOU AND FREDDY PLAY BASE-BALL AFTER SCHOOL. YOU FEEL GREAT. EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!



FREDDY LOOKS DOUBTFULLY AT YOUR MUDDY SHIRT...

MAY'S GONNA BE SORE IF YOU SIT DOWN AT THE TABLE LIKE THAT MIKE.



OKAY! I'LL STOP OFF AT THE HOUSE AND CHANGE. SEE YOU IN TEN MINUTES!

GOOD THING DAD GAVE ME THIS KEY TO THE BACK DOOR...



ON THE KITCHEN TABLE IS A LOAD OF FRESHLY IRONED LAUNDRY YOU CHOOSE A SHIRT...



A PRICKLY FEELING TRAVELS UP YOUR SPINE. THE MURDER... WOULD IT HURT TO HAVE ONE LAST LOOK? PERHAPS THE IMAGE HAS BEEN ALTERED NOW...



YOU SWALLOW BRIE! YOU OPEN THE DOOR TO THE HALLWAY...



GONE! SOMEBODY TOOK IT AWAY!

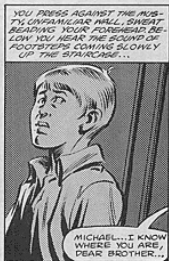
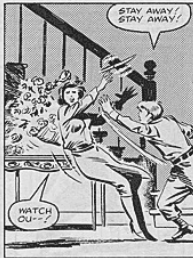


MOM DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY IT LOOKED THERE AND STORED IT SOMEWHERE...

WHA--? CAROLINE!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE WITH MOM AND DAD!





IN DESPERATION, YOU LASH OUT, KICKING THE BREAST FROM HER, DRIVING HER BACK...



YOU DIVE INTO THE SHADOWS AND WAIT, BODY ROCKED WITH TERROR...



YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME, MICHAEL. MY TURN HAS COME! YOURS HAS ENDED!



HER EYES GLITTER ASHESLY, SHEETING ACROSS THE SHA-DOWED ROOM. YOU STIFFEN AS THEY ARISEN MISERABLY ON YOUR BLANCHED FACE...



AN UNEVEN BOARD OF A TWISTED AN-GLE THE KNIFE FLIES FROM CAROLINE'S HAND, HER BODY PITCHES FORWARD...



...STRAIGHT INTO YOUR FACE... THE IMAGE OF YOUR FACE REFLECTED IN THE ATTIC WINDOW...

AND ONE LAST TIME, THE IMAGES FLOW ACROSS YOUR BRAIN... THE WAXEN CLAW-LIKE HAND, THE VILIOUS, STARING EYES OF CAROLINE...



... THE KNIFE...



... DRIPPING...



...IN YOUR OWN TREMBLING HAND...

FIN

AND NOW--THE ADVENTURES OF THAT TIME-TRAVELIN'

BUCKY BIZARRE!

UH-OH! I WAS PLANNING TO VISIT
MY PALS IN THE PALEOLITHIC AGE!

BUT I CAN'T LET THAT BLOOD-
CURDLING SCREAM GO UNHEEDED!

SMALL
WOOD

ACCORDING TO THE
TIME-DISPLACEMENT
DIAL, I'VE LANDED
AT THE TURN OF
THE CENTURY! A
RATHER GOTHIC PERIOD.

AND, I SUPPOSE,
THE PERFECT PLACE
FOR SUCH A SCREAM!

GET AWAY
FROM ME, YOU MASHER!
HOW DARE YOU TRY TO
KISS

NO, NO, M'AM!
HE'S NOT TRYING TO
KISS YOUR NECK! HE'S
TRYING TO BITE IT!

SMEK! SMEK! SMEK!

MAYBE YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT
VAMPIRES, BUT I'VE MADE AN EXTENSIVE
STUDY OF THE SUBJECT!

SO, I CAN TELL
YOU EXACTLY
WHAT TO DO!

FIRST OF ALL,
RUN LIKE HELL!

